

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-03 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5184
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AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 6966

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, EG, XF
SUBJECT: UNEF: FOREIGN MINISTER'S PRESS STATEMENT, JULY 15, 1975

REF: CAIRO 6965

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1. FOLLOWING IS TRANSCRIPT OF PRESS STATEMENT MADE BY DEPUTY PRIME
MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER ISMAIL FAHMI AT 2100 HOURS JULY 15,
1975 TO ASSEMBLED CAIRO PRESS CORPS AT FOREIGN MINISTER'S OFFICE
IN TAHRIR PALACE:

2. QUOTE

I THINK THE LAST TIME WE WERE TOGETHER WAS IN ASWAN, I BELIEVE,
WHERE YOU WERE VERY ACTIVELY COVERING THE DEVELOPMENTS
THAT TOOK PLACE AT THAT TIME. I ASKED YOU TO COME TO THIS
CONFERENCE TO PUT YOU INTO THE PICTURE SO FAR AS POSSIBLE.
THE PRESENT REPRESENTATIVE OF EGYPT TO THE UN HANDED THE SECRETARY
GENERAL A LETTER FROM ME WHICH WILL BE DISTRIBUTED TO ALL OF
YOU VERY SOON. I DON'T INTEND TO READ THAT LETTER. AS YOU WILL
SEE FROM THE LETTER, THE LETTER IS SELF-EXPLANATORY. NEVERTHELESS,
IT MAY BE OPPORTUNE THAT I TELL YOU A FEW WORDS. TO BEGIN WITH,
AS YOU MAY RECALL, THE SECURITY COUNCIL, AFTER THE CEASE-FIRE,
ADOPTED THE SO-CALLED FAMOUS RESOLUTION 338 ASKING THE PARTIES TO
IMMEDIATELY ENGAGE IN NEGOTIATIONS TO IMPLEMENT FULLY
THE RESOLUTION 242 IN ITS ENTIRETY. WE WENT TO GENEVA AND SINCE
THEN UP TILL NOW THE COUNCIL, ON VARIOUS OCCASIONS FROM THE VERY
BEGINNING, ESTABLISHED UNITED NATION FORCES, AND THEN EXTENDED THE
MANDATE OF THE FORCE EVERY TIME FOR SIX MONTHS TILL THE LAST TIME IN
MARCH WHEN THE ISRAELIS DID NOT RESPOND TO THE AMERICAN EFFORTS.
EGYPT DID NOT AGREE TO A FURTHER EXTENSION FOR SIX MONTHS BUT AGREED
THAT THE MANDATE WILL CONTINUE FOR ONLY THREE MONTHS. AFTER THE FIRST
SIX MONTHS, WHEN THE COUNCIL RECONSIDERED THE SECOND EXTENSION,
THE SECRETARY GENERAL MADE A STATEMENT IN THE COUNCIL IN WHICH HE
SAID THAT THE DISENGAGEMENT OF EGYPTIAN AND ISRAELI FORCES IS ONLY
A FIRST STEP TOWARD THE SETTLEMENT OF THE MIDDLE EASTERN PROBLEM
AND THAT THE CONTINUED OPERATION OF THE UNEF IS ESSENTIAL. IT IS
ESSENTIAL NOT ONLY FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF THE PRESENT QUIET IN THE
EGYPTIAN/ISRAELI SECTOR BUT ALSO TO ASSIST--
AND THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT-- BUT ALSO TO ASSIST, IF REQUIRED,
IN FURTHER EFFORTS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A JUST AND DURABLE
PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THE COUNCIL, WITHOUT A SINGLE DISSENTING
VOTE, CONCURRED WITH THE VIEWS OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL. FROM
THIS IT IS VERY CLEAR THAT UNEF WAS NOT ONLY FOR THE
PURPOSE TO SEPARATE THE FORCES BUT ALSO TO PREPARE, TO PAVE THE WAY
AND TO ASSIST IN FURTHERING THE PROGRESS TOWARDS THE LONG ROAD TO
PEACE.

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AND ON ANOTHER OCCASION THE SECURITY COUNCIL EXTENDED THE MANDATE
FOR AN ADDITIONAL SIX MONTHS BUT NOTED THAT, AND I AM QUOTING, THE
OVERALL SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST WILL REMAIN FUNDAMENTALLY
UNSTABLE, AS LONG AS THE UNDERLYING PROBLEMS ARE UNRESOLVED. END OF
QUOTE. CONSEQUENTLY EFFORTS WERE DEPLOYED DURING THE MONTH OF
FEBRUARY AND MARCH 1975 TO ACHIEVE A FURTHER DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT,
WHICH WAS NECESSARY AS AN ADDITIONAL MEASURE DESIGNED TO PAVE THE
WAY FOR THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, WHERE SUBSTANTIAL ISSUES CONDUCIVE
TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A JUST AND DURABLE PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST
COULD BE DEALT WITH. BUT DUE TO ISRAELI POLICY OF INTRANSIGENCE
AND PROCRASTINATION THOSE EFFORTS, AS YOU ALL KNOW, AND THE WORLD
KNOWS, FAILED. IN SPITE OF THAT, EGYPT, IN ORDER TO DEFUSE THE
EXPLOSIVE SITUATION, AND IN CONTRAST WITH THE ISRAELI ATTITUDE, AND

WITHOUT ANY HESITATION WHATSOEVER, PRESIDENT SADAT DECIDED TO REOPEN THE SUEZ CANAL FOR INTERNATIONAL NAVIGATION, AND EMBARKED UPON A MAJOR PROGRAM FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE CITIES IN THE SUEZ CANAL ZONE, WHICH YOU ALL HAVE SEEN. 600,00 CITIZENS OF THIS AREA HAVE RETURNED TO THEIR HOMES. ALL THESE MEASURES AND MAJOR DIVERSIONS WERE BEYOND ANY DOUBT, AND COULD NOT BE CHALLENGED AT ALL, THEY WERE BEYOND ANY DOUBT PRACTICAL STEPS TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF EGYPT TO STIMULATE THE PROCESS OF PEACE. MOREOVER, AND TO GIVE A FURTHER CHANCE FOR NEW EFFORTS, PRESIDENT SADAT DECIDED TO RENEW THE MANDATE OF UNEF FOR AN ADDITIONAL PERIOD OF THREE MONTHS, IN ORDER TO AFFORD PEACE EFFORTS EVERY POSSIBLE CHANCE.

AS YOU MAY KNOW, EGYPT IN ACCEPTING RESOLUTION 340, WHICH ESTABLISHED UNEF, DECLARED ITS READINESS TO EXTEND HER COOPERATION IN THIS RESPECT, BUT UNDERLINED AT THE SAME TIME THE TEMPORARY NATURE OF THE FORCE AND ITS FUNCTIONS AS THE FIRST STEP IN THE DECISION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL.

ALTHOUGH THIS WAS THE UNDERLYING CONCEPT IN ALL THE SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS ESTABLISHING AND RENEWING THE MANDATE OF THE FORCE, ISRAEL HAS PROFITED, AND STILL IS TRYING TO PROFIT, FROM THE RELATIVE PREVAILING QUIET TO FURTHER ITS OCCUPATION RATHER THAN TO ASSIST THE EFFORTS AIMING AT ACHIEVING A LASTING PEACE.

IT MUST BE EMPHASIZED, THEREFORE, THAT, WITH NO FURTHER STEPS TAKEN TOWARD PEACE, EGYPT CANNOT ADHERE TO THE ISRAELI INTERPRETATION OF THE RAISON D'ETRE OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FORCES. YOU ARE AWARE, AND THE WHOLE WORLD HAS NOTICED DURING THE LAST FEW DAYS, THAT A HOLOCAUST OF STATEMENTS AND COUNTERSTATEMENTS AND CONTRARY STATEMENTS FROM THE PRIME MINISTER OF ISRAEL MR. RABIN,

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WHICH ANY RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT MUST TAKE VERY SERIOUSLY. RABIN IS NOT A PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER; RABIN IS THE PRIME MINISTER OF ISRAEL, AND WHEN HE TALKS, WE ASSUME THAT HE IS REFLECTING THE ISRAELI LINE AND THE ISRAELI POLICY AND ACCORDING TO A SPECIFIC PHILOSOPHY, AND THIS IS WHY NEITHER WE IN EGYPT, NOR ANYBODY OUTSIDE EGYPT (IN EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES, IN ASIA AND AFRICA, IN THE SOVIET UNION) CANNOT TAKE THESE MAJOR POLICY STATEMENTS OF RABIN LIGHTLY. SO, IF ANY DETERIORATION OF THE SITUATION WILL TAKE PLACE, IT WILL BE SOLELY THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PRIME MINISTER OF ISRAEL MR. RABIN. IT FALLS UPON HIM AND HIS GOVERNMENT, THE BLAME FOR ANY MAJOR CONSEQUENCES WHICH MAY TAKE PLACE AS A RESULT OF THE LINE HE IS TAKING. HAVING THIS IN MIND, AND AS I EXPLAINED TO YOU VERY CLEARLY THE BACKGROUND OF UNEF AND ITS PURPOSES AND ITS USEFULNESS, AN EXTENSION OF THE MANDATE OF THE FORCES BY THE SECURITY COUNCIL WOULD IN FACT DEFEAT THE VERY PURPOSE THE COUNCIL ENVISAGED IN ESTABLISHING THE FORCE. SINCE THE QUIET IS BEING TRANSFORMED INTO STAGNATION AND, CONSEQUENTLY, THE PERPETUATION OF THE OCCUPATION OF THE ARAB LAND BY FORCE, IT IS THEREFORE ABUNDANTLY CLEAR THAT IT IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR EGYPT TO CONSENT TO ANY MEASURE THAT COULD LEAD TO THE CONTINUATION OF THE OCCUPATION OF ITS TERRITORY OR THE TERRITORY OF OUR BROTHERS IN THE ARAB WORLD. WHILE EGYPT DOES NOT CONSENT

TO FURTHER RENEW THE MANDATE OF UNEF, SHE IS NOT AGAINST THE PROPER USE OF THE FORCE. I REPEAT AGAIN: WHILE EGYPT DOES NOT CONSENT TO FURTHER RENEW THE MANDATE OF UNEF, EGYPT IS NOT AGAINST THE PROPER USE OF THE FORCE. EGYPT ONLY OBJECTS TO THE USE OF THE FORCE, AND ITS PRESENCE, BY ISRAEL AS A MEANS TO MAINTAIN A STATE OF NO WAR-NO PEACE AND THE PERPETUATION OF THE OCCUPATION OF EGYPTIAN TERRITORY, IN DEFIANCE OF THE PURPOSES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE UNITED NATION CHARTER AND INTERNATIONAL LAW. EGYPT, HOWEVER, DOES NOT PREVENT THE SECURITY COUNCIL FROM ACTING IN CONFORMITY WITH ITS PREROGATIVES UNDER THE CHARTER, SO THAT ISRAEL DOES NOT MISINTERPRET EITHER THE PHYSICAL PRESENCE, OR THE PHILOSOPHY, BEHIND THE UNEF, WHICH WAS ESTABLISHED TO SERVE THE CAUSE OF PEACE IN THIS HIGHLY STRATEGIC AND HIGHLY SENSITIVE AREA.

THIS IS WHAT I WANTED TO TELL YOU, AND I THINK IT WILL MAKE BIG NEWS, BUT I AM READY TO ANSWER AS MANY QUESTIONS AS YOU WOULD LIKE IF YOU ARE PATIENT AND YOU DON'T WANT TO GO TO YOUR TELEPHONES AND RUN TO TRANSMIT THIS IMMEDIATELY. UNQUOTE:

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3. QUESTION PERIOD FOLLOWING STATEMENT FAILED TO THROW MUCH LIGHT ON OBSCURE GOE POSITION AS RESULT OF THIS ACTION. FAHMY CALLED UPON SC TO ASSUME ITS RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER CHARTER, SUCH AS UNDER CHAPTERS 6 AND 7. FAHMY DID SAY THAT THERE COULD BE NO PRESENCE OF UNEF WITHOUT MANDATE, BUT HE QUALIFIED THIS BY SAYING THAT EGYPT WAS NOT AGAINST PRESENCE OF FORCE IT IT PROVED TO BE USEFUL IN PROMOTING STATE OF PEACE, NOT OF NO PEACE/NO WAR.

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4. COMMENT: ACTION TAKEN BY GOE NOT TO EXTEND UNEF MANDATE BUT ALSO NOT TO TERMINATE ITS PRESENCE IS "FORMULA" TO WHICH FAHMY HAD EARLIER ALLUDED IN DISCUSSION WITH AMBASSADOR. THIS STEP OBVIOUSLY DESIGNED TO INCREASE PRESSURE ON ISRAELIS TO AGREE TO INTERIM SETTLEMENT WITHOUT EITHER CAUSING ISRAELIS TO REJECT FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF POSSIBLE TERMS ON SECOND DISENGAGEMENT OR RAISING TENSION OF SINAI FRONT TO LEVEL OF THREAT OF RENEWED CONFLICT. THIS IS CLEARLY RISKY STEP CALCULATED TO CREATE IMPRESSION THAT EGYPT STILL IN CONTROL OF SITUATION RATHER THAN IN POSITION OF WAITING FOR CRUMBS DROPPED FROM ISRAELI TABLE.

5. RESULT OF GOE ACTION IS TO PLACE COMPLICATED PROBLEM IN LAP OF UNSC AND TO TEST ITS INNOVATIVE TALENT TO PRODUCE FLEXIBLE SOLUTION WHICH WILL KEEP UNEF IN SINAI WITHOUT EGYPT'S HAVING FORMALLY SANCTIONED ITS PRESENCE THERE, AT LEAST FOR AN UNSTATED PERIOD DURING WHICH ISRAELI MUST SHOW TRUE INTENTIONS

TO PARTICIPATE IN PEACE PROCESS. SUCCESS OF THIS PLOY WILL DEPEND
UPON ATTITUDE AND REACTION OF ISRAEL-- AND ON ABILITY OF US AND
OTHERS TO INFLUENCE SUCH REACTION IN MODERATE SENSE.

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